No 2

A

SERMON

AGAINST

Murmuring:

PREACHED in the

Cathedral Church

Of St. *PETER*

EXON,

On the XXIXth of *May*, 1680.

By *THOMAS LONG*, D. D. One of the Prebendaries of that Church.

Exod. xvi. 8.

Your murmurings are not against us, but against the Lord.

LONDON,

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TO THE

Right Reverend FATHER in GOD

THOMAS

LORD Biſhop of

EXETER:

THIS *Sermon not reaching the ears of thoſe for whom it was chiefly intended, I have by your Lordſhips direction offered it to their hands, that it may be as a Glaſs not only to ſhew them their diſtorted faces but infectious breaths, which may fix ſome ſpots on the glaſs it ſelf, but ſuch as* (I *doubt not*) *will be eaſily wiped off. I have attempted a very difficult work, The governing of an unruly evil, for as St.* James *ſayes,* every kind of beaſts Chap. 3. 7.
and ſerpents have been tamed by man, *except the Serpent that is within him,* the Tongue, which no man can tame. *It was made to be our Glory, but we generally turn it to our ſhame, eſpecially while therewith we ſeem to bleſs God, but curſe and ſpeak evil of thoſe who bear moſt of his Image, his Magiſtrates and Miniſters,* v. 9. *It is*

full of deadly poyſon, *ſuch as never hurts leſs than three at once, the perſon ſlandered in his good name, by Calumny; the perſon that liſteneth to him, in his Charity, by Prejudice and evil ſurmiſes; and himſelf moſt of all, by doing the Devils work in ſlandering his brethren,* v. 8. *It is a* Fire, *ſaith St.* James, v. 6. *and the worſt of fires, for it is* ſet on fire of hell; (*i. e.*) *the Devil the father of lyes; He is that god of Contention who imploys theſe Bouteſeaus as* Mars *did his Prieſts to ſcatter coals of fire in the Temple and inflame the whole courſe of Nature. Other evils may be ſeen and avoided, but this ſhoots out arrows that fly as inviſibly in the day as in the dark; it is of ſuch a Verſatile and* Proteus-*like nature, that no knot can hold it, but it deſies the Laws of God and man.* Our tongues are our own, we ought to ſpeak, who is Lord over us? *Pſal.* 12.

I ſhould not have enlarged this diſcourſe but that I perceive Calumny is become the malus genius *of the Nation, which ſeems to be poſſeſſed not with a dumb but a talkative ſpirit, that hath turned Religion into lying and ſlandering. And ſuch mens* Religion, *St.* James *aſſures us,* is vain, ch. 1.26. *'Tis like that wherewith the Votaries of* Mercury *did worſhip him by caſting ſtones at his Image and murdering their brethren in* Effigie. *Our Apoſtle* Chap. 3. 14. *diſcovers the root of this evil to be a bitter zeal, or* envying and ſtrife in the heart: *the bliſtering of the tongue is cauſed by an ulcerous heart; and 'tis from within out of*

the

the heart that all theſe impurities do proceed. Wherefore according to our Saviours method, I have endeavoured to cleanſe firſt that which is within, and to ſuppreſs the firſt motions of murmuring and diſcontent, by applying the lenitives of Right reaſon and Chriſtian Religion which teacheth us to be of a meek and calm, a cool and quiet Spirit, to do our own buſineſs, and be content with ſuch things as we have, and not to quarrel at the providences of God and the Adminiſtration of publick affairs.

But now men are grown preſumptuous, ſelf-willed, they are not afraid to ſpeak evil of dignities and things which they underſtand not, 2 *Pet.* 2. 10. *They are not afraid to inſinuate as if the King favoured the Plot, which hath been declared to be againſt His Majeſties perſon, and the Eſtabliſhed Religion. They quarrel the Succeſſion, and would put by the true and undoubted Heir. They inſinuate that His Majeſty is no friend to Parliaments, and would Rule us by an Arbitrary power. And as to the Church of* England, *they accuſe it for declining apace to Popery, and approving Popiſh, Socinian and Pelagian Doctrines, as* Lewes du Moulin, *and the Author of the* Celeuſma; *when it is confeſſed by foreign Divines, that it is the greateſt fence againſt thoſe pernicious errors. They talk as if the Church Governours were mere Thorns, and the inſtruments of the Devil, exerciſing Tyranny and Oppreſſion, whereas the termes of Conformity as to the*

people,

people, are confeſſed to be much more facile, than ever they were ſince the firſt Reformation. And in truth the Indulgence granted to ſuch men hath deſtroyed more by 1000 to one, than that which they call perſecution (i. e.) the execution of good laws. They tell the people of an utter impoſſibility of Conforming to the Church of England, becauſe of many heinous ſins in that Conformity, (Baxter's Plea for peace,) and that the Conformiſts are generally guilty of Perjury. And theſe baits are diſperſed through the Nation, and greedily ſwallowed by the Credulous people who conſider not what deadly hooks are under them. And how great a matter a little of ſuch wild fire kindleth! Againſt theſe falſe ſuggeſtions and dangerous murmurings, the enſuing diſcourſe is intended.

The Perſians were wont to obſerve an Anniverſary Feſtival which they called the death of Vices; and as an Embleme thereof, they deſtroyed as many Serpents as they found in the Land. I could not deviſe how to celebrate this happy Feſtival better than by endeavouring the mortification of thoſe murmuring and diſcontented vices which were the cauſe of our former troubles, and reduced us to ſo low a condition, that none but Gods own hand could deliver us, as with all thankfulneſs we acknowledge. But as Ezra ſays, ch. 9. 13. If after all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, for which God hath puniſhed us leſs than we deſerve,

ſerve, and hath given us ſuch deliverance as this, we ſhould again break his Commandments, *and neither fear him for his Judgments, nor obey him for his Clemency, but continue to be as our Fathers were, a murmuring and rebellious generation, may not our* God be juſtly angry with us, till he have conſumned us ſo that there be no remnant nor eſcaping? *May we not fear that he will deal with us as he did with the murmuring* Iſraelites, *who for forty years together under the various and miraculous diſpenſations of mercies and judgments ſo grieved his Holy Spirit that he* Swore in his wrath they ſhould never enter into his reſt? *Pſal. 95. Our ſins have really brought us to that brink of deſtruction which our guilty fears make us to apprehend with horror, and yet we ſtrive with all our might to caſt each other into that gulf which like an open Sepulchre is prepared to ſwallow us all.* Archimedes *is ſaid to have invented ſuch an Engine, as if he could have found where to fix it, he would have undertaken by it to remove the Globe of the Earth out of its place. This Engine ſome Mathematicians ſuppoſe to have been a Screw; which loſt invention, ſome of our Age have recovered. And if male-contented ſpirits be permitted to inſinuate to the hearts of the credulous people, their fears and jealouſies, their lyes and ſlanders, their murmurings and diſcontent, they would in a ſhort time remove the well Eſtabliſhed Foundations of Church and State.*

The

The God of Peace, Unity and Concord who ſtilleth the raging of the Sea, allay the madneſs of ſuch people. "*And give us all that peace which the world cannot* "*give; that our hearts may be ſet to obey his Com-* "*mandments, and alſo that by him we being defended* "*from the fear of our enemies, may paſs our time in* "*reſt and quietneſs, through the merits of Jeſus Chriſt our* "*Saviour.*

So daily prayeth

Your Lordſhips moſt Humble

and Obliged Servant,

THO. LONG.

A

SERMON

AGAINST

Murmuring.

Eccleſiaſtes vii. 10.

Say not thou, what is the cauſe that the former days were better than theſe? For thou doſt not inquire wiſely concerning this.

THERE is nothing wanting to complete the Solemnity of this Day, or indeed the happineſs of the Whole Nation, beſides Thankful and Obedient hearts to God and the King, for the many incomparable bleſſings which under them we now enjoy. That character which the Royal Prophet gives, *Pſal.* 144. of a *bleſſed people*, agrees well with us: for firſt, (which is the foundation of all) we have the *Lord to be our God*, v. laſt. And our God hath *given Salvation to our King, ver.* 10. He hath *delivered* David *his Servant from the peril of the Sword.* And again, he hath *delivered*

him

him from the hand of ſtrange children, whoſe mouth ſpeaketh of vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falſhood. And now *our Sons grow up as young plants,* and *our daughters are as the poliſhed corners of the Temple, our Garners are full, affording all manner of ſtore; our Sheep bring forth thouſands and ten thouſands in our ſtreets. There is no decay* (of Trade) *no leading into Captivity.* Only we cannot ſay, *there is no complaining in our ſtreets.* This ſin lyeth as an indeleble reproach upon our Nation. We *Engliſh*-men never know when we are well. But what ſhall we ſay? when the moſt proſperous raign of Peaceable *Solomon* was diſturbed with the Murmurings of Male-contents, it is no wonder if it be ſo with us. Every ear is filled with the hiſſing of ſuch Serpents, and the noiſe which they make among the Thickets of the people; but it will require the wiſdom of *Solomon* to charm them; and he did it ſo effectually, that though they did ſome time hiſs at him, yet they could never hurt him, for there was peace all the days of *Solomon.* And that it may be ſo with us, I ſhall follow the method preſcribed in the Text, where,

Firſt, We have a Royal Prohibition, *Ne dicas, ſay not thou.*

Secondly, We have the ſin deſcribed againſt which the Prohibition lyeth, which by conſent of the beſt Expoſitors is a murmuring and repining at the preſent Diſpenſations of God, and the Adminiſtration of Publick affairs by our Governors.

Thirdly, We have the ſecret and ſubtile pretences by which it inſinuates it ſelf to the hearts of the people, *What is the cauſe?* and a falſe and odious compariſon between the former and the preſent times, *The former times were better than theſe.*

And

And Fourthly, The folly and impiety of ſuch ſecret and miſchievous Arts, *Thou doſt not inquire wiſely concerning this.*

Firſt, Of the Royal Prohibition, *Say not thou,* that is, Though you queſtion the King's Prerogative, yet quarrel not with the Prerogative of God by whom Kings Reign and Princes decree judgment; as if he did not ſet fit Governours over us, or did not ſtill retain a power over them, who hath the hearts of all Kings in his hands, and diſpoſeth of them to his own wiſe and gracious ends either for the puniſhment or proſperity of a Nation: If the former days were better, it was God's will to have them ſo; and the preſent are not ſo bad, but we by our ingratitude deſerve to have them worſe: If we will not ſubmit to *Solomons* rod, God may ſend a *Rehoboam* to chaſtiſe us with Scorpions. Know therefore that this ſin doth not terminate in the perſons or government of our Princes, but invades the Throne of God; as *Moſes* told the *Iſraelites*, *your murmuring is not againſt us, but againſt the Lord.* And therefore *Solomon* ſtrikes a blow at the root of this ſin, the *ne dicas* is *ne dicas corde*, admit not a diſcontented thought: for as where the Serpent gets in his head, he eaſily skrews in his whole body, ſo where the heart is ſowred with a little of this Leaven, it ferments and envenometh the whole man, infects the neighbourhood and troubleth the whole Nation. *Solomon* expounds the *ne dicas* in the Text, by *ne maledicas*, *ch.*10.20. for to murmur is *ſecretò maledicere*; and we are not to ſpeak evil of the Rulers of the people *ne in Conſcientiâ*, not under a pretence of Conſcience; becauſe we muſt ſubmit for Conſcience-ſake; we may not do it *in ſcientia*, not ſpeak the evil we know by them. It is not fit to ſay to a King *Thou art wicked.* Much leſs

Ex. 16.8.

Job 34.18.

maiſt thou do it *in conclavibus* among thy Confidents, in private meetings. It is probably conjectured that *Solomon* had reſpect to *Jeroboam* and his confederates, 1 *Kings* 12. 26. *Dixit corde, He ſaid in his heart, now ſhall the kingdom return to the houſe of David.* He had learnt by *Shimei*'s puniſhment not to rail or conſpire openly againſt the King, but contrived ſecretly; for though it be ſaid that he lift up his hand againſt the King, it was not in open rebellion, for there was no war in *Solomon*'s days; but the phraſe ſignifyeth, *juramento ſe obligavit*, he and his confederates entred into a Covenant againſt the King, the miſchievous effects whereof though they were ſuppreſt by the wiſdom of *Solomon* all his days, yet they brake out in the days of his Succeſſor, and they compla'n even of *Solomon* himſelf, *Thy Father made our yoke grievous*, 1 Kings 12. 4. *Now therefore make thou the grievous ſervice of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter*; And yet we read not of any contribution except for the building of Gods houſe, or the neceſſary ſupport of his own, to both which the people for the moſt part offered willingly. Nevertheleſs this gracious and peaceable Prince had many enemies who hated him, as *Davids* enemies did without a cauſe. They acknowledged that God as well as his father deſigned him for the Crown, and ſetled it on his head againſt all oppoſition, for *Adonijah* uſurped the kingdom, *Abiathar*, *Joab* and *Shimei* abetted the Uſurpation, and were all defeated. God appearing for *Solomon* not once or twice for the preſervation of him from ſuch enemies, was a daily miracle. But *Jeroboam*, *Solomons* ſervant whom he had preferred and greatly honoured, was his moſt dangerous and implacable enemy who filled the peoples hearts with fears and jealouſies, and their mouths with complaints of his Government; and very induſtrious he was to find out

1 *Kings* 2. 15.

ſome

ſome real cauſe for his complaints, but finding none, he could only keep the people alarmed with the ſeditious Queries in the Text, *what is the cauſe?*

This being the Sin forbidden in the Text I ſhall aggravate it, 1. From the Cauſes, 2. From the Effects of it.

1. The *Cauſe* in general is the *luſts of men.* So *S. Jude* deſcribes *Murmurers* to be ſuch as *walk after their own luſts, ver.* 16. For when men are reſolved to enjoy their luſts, they will indure no reſtraint from God or man, be their laws never ſo eaſie or equal: every one of them hath the mind of an Emperor, to live above the Laws themſelves, and to make their will a Law to others. And hence it is that they would heap up Governours to themſelves as they heap up Teachers, or rather uſurp both thoſe Offices to themſelves, that it might be with them as when there was no King in *Iſrael,* every one might do what ſeemeth good in his own eyes. *S. Jude v.* 16. calls them μεμψίμοιροι, complainers of their preſent condition, as too narrow and uneaſie for their great Souls, which they think fit and able Intelligences to inform the higheſt orbs of Magiſtracy and Miniſtry.

Ex vitio malignitatis humanæ vetera laudantur, præſentia faſtidio habentur. Tacitus.

2. *Ariſtotle* ſays it proceeds from ſelf-love, and a fond conceit of our own parts and merits, for no man thinks too highly of himſelf but he thinks too meanly of others. *I am not as other men,* ſays the Phariſee, *nor as this Publican.* Some reſpect ſuch a perſon is content to allow the Worthies of former ages, who are removed out of his his way, and cannot rival him in his deſigns.

Sed niſi quæ terris ſemota ſuiſque
Temporibus defuncta videt, faſtidit & odit.

If virtue it ſelf were incarnate among ſuch, they would look on her with an evil eye. The *Phariſees* ſeemed much affected with the Sufferings of the ancient Prophets, when at the ſame time they perſecuted the Son of God by

by whom they were all inſpired. So the Poetaſters in *Virgils* age, publickly read the harſh Poems of *Ennius*, deſpiſing him whom all ages ſince have deſervedly admired. And on this account *Jeroboam* and the Malecontents in his days magnified themſelves as if they were thoſe Lilies of the field, to one of which *Solomon* in all his glory was not to be compared. There is ſcarce a Potſherd though newly taken from the earth, though empty and crazy, but if it be not preſently gilded over and made a veſſel of honour, is ready to expoſtulate with the Potter, why haſt thou made me thus?

3. This humor proceeds not only from a mans ſuppoſed worth, but from his real weakneſs. It is *impotentia ſpiritûs*, the want of power to govern our own ſpirits that makes us impatient of the government of others. The ſhalloweſt rivers run with the greateſt noiſe. And in all nature the weakeſt things are moſt querulous and ungovernable. Children will be froward, as well full as faſting; the weakneſs of their reaſon and judgment makes their deſires and paſſions ſo extravagant and impetuous. The Olive and the Vine can content themſelves with their own fatneſs, and the good man is ſatisfied from himſelf. As *Cincinnatus* and the worthies of old *Rome*, who could command as Generals in the Camp, and adviſe as Oracles in the Senate; and when their Countrey was ſafe, return again to their little Cottages and the Plough. It is the ſpiny bramble that is alway aſpiring and in perpetual motion until it kindle a fire to conſume it ſelf and the Cedars in *Lebanon*, *Judges* 9. 15.

4. Another ingredient is guiltineſs, which always makes men jealous and ſuſpicious, eſpecially of ſuch as are in Authority. And as guilt cauſeth fear, ſo fear produceth hatred of thoſe whom they have offended (*i.e.*) the Legiſlators, whom not being able to oppoſe by force, they

they ſeek to undermine by fraud and ſecret practices: As ſome malefactors that are purſued joyn themſelves to the purſuers, and by falſe ſuggeſtions and ſubtle inſinuations raiſe ſuſpicion on others to clear themſelves. The moſt guilty are moſt clamorous and complain firſt, and feign themſelves moſt diligent againſt the evils of the times, which they themſelves have cauſed and continued. What is the Cauſe, ſay they, of the preſent troubles? when they and their fathers houſe are thoſe that trouble our *Iſrael*. Which brings us to a ſecond Aggravation of this Sin:

2. The miſchievous *Effects* of it; for 1. as *S. Paul* tells us, 2 *Tim.* 3. 1. when men *are lovers of themſelves, covetous, boaſters, proud, diſobedient to parents, unthankful*, &c. then *perillous times ſhall come*. Nothing doth more portend the diſpleaſure of God againſt a Nation, than when he permits popular clamours and tumults to invade the publick authority, and the contumacy of thoſe that break the laws, to outbrave the courage of thoſe that ſhould execute them.

2. *St. Paul* tells us of another effect, *Phil.* 2. 14. where he joyns murmurings and diſputings. Such men are ever more ready to cenſure and controll than to obey the laws of their Superiours. They are ſtarting of ſcruples and queries not ſo much to ſatisfie themſelves, being reſolved never to be ſatisfied, as to diſtract others: And as *Pliny* obſerves of the Scorpion, that he doth (*meditari vulnera*) dart forth his ſting on every motion of his body, leſt any occaſion of doing miſchief ſhould be omitted; *Et ſi non aliqua nocuiſſet mortuus eſſet*: In all companies, upon every occaſion ſome men ſhew their diſcontent by ſowre looks and ſullen behaviours, their envyous grudgings and vindictive groans. Their Faſting when they ſhould feaſt, and rejoycing when they ſhould mourn, Condemning the Laws which they ſhould obey, do manifeſt:

niſeſt that the ſpirit by which they live and breath is a ſpirit of Contradiction. "The rude people (*ſays the* "*Royal Martyr in his ch. of Tumults*) are taught firſt to "Petition, then to Proteſt, then to Dictate, then to "Command. This was the method uſed in 43, as it is left on record in the Preface to the Covenant. — "After "other means of Supplications, Remonſtrances, Pro-"teſtations, *&c.* Now at laſt we enter into a Solemn "League and Covenant. And by this method the late Tumults in *Scotland* commenced into a Rebellion. They ſow the Seeds of Sedition in private meetings, thence iſſue Petitions, Remonſtrances, and at laſt the Conventiclers appear in armed companies and declare for the Covenant againſt the Oath of Supremacy, and the Kings uſurped power in Eccleſiaſtical affairs, and condemn the obſervation of the 29*th* of *May* as Superſtitious. And too many in *England* were on Tiptoe to have danced after this Scotch Pipe. And ſo we come,

3. To the *laſt* effect of theſe murmurings, which *Moſes* hath obſerved, *numb.* 17. 10. where he expreſly calls them *Rebels*. And we all know that murmurings were thoſe winds which blew up and ſcattered thoſe coals of jealouſie which kept the whole Nation in a flame twenty years together, and now threaten a new Conflagration. For as the Learned *Verulam* obſerves, there is only this difference between ſeditious murmurings and ſeditious tumults, that the one is the Brother and the other the Siſter; Tumults and Seditions are more maſculine, but Murmurings as malicious. Which the Ancients have ingeniouſly deſcribed in the Fable of the Giants which the earth brought forth, who for warring againſt the gods were ſmitten with Thunderbolts, and to revenge their death, the Earth laboured again, and brought forth Fame. The Moral is this: The Common people are that

Earth

Earth who oppoſing their Governours were ſubdued by force of Arms; but to be avenged of them they brought forth Fame, (*i. e.*) Seditious reports and ſlanders, which had ſuch ſecret motions and ſubtle evaſions that the gods themſelves (*i. e.*) their Governors could not ſilence them. Which is the third thing propoſed, the ſubtle pretences by which this luſt inſinuates it ſelf, *what is the cauſe*, &c.

As if they had ſaid: The preſent times are much degenerated from the former, and are ſtill growing worſe. Atheiſm is increaſed and Godlineſs diſcouraged, vile perſons are exalted and ſuch as are truly honourable deſpiſed, and there are few or none that are valiant for the truth, or ſhew their zeal for the Lord of Hoſts. In former times men were more active for Reformation of abuſes both in Church and State, there wanted not ſome that would tell King *David* his faults to his face, and accuſe him for a man of bloud; and if he ſeemed not to hear the Curſes of *Shimei*, there was a *Sheba* to blow a Trumpet and proclaim, *Every man to his tents, O Iſrael.* Nay there was an *Achitophel* whoſe Counſel was eſteemed as an Oracle of God, that prevailed with *Abſalom* to undertake to redreſs the Grievances of the people, and theſe made their party ſtrong enough to drive the King out of all his ſtrong holds, and chaſe him not only from one mountain to another, but from one Kingdom to another, and at laſt to *bind the King himſelf in chains, and his Nobles in fetters of Iron.* And this honour had thoſe ancient Saints. 1 *Kings* 12. 16. 2 *Sam.* 16. 15.

And as for Church Reformation we have the Examples of thoſe Godly zealots that publickly proteſted againſt thoſe Superſtitious vanities and heatheniſh cuſtoms which *David* would have joyned to the Worſhip of God, ſuch as his bowing and dancing before the Ark, his appointing ſeveral Orders of Prieſts and Levites with

Vocal and Inſtrumenral muſick for the Service of the Temple, who were to praiſe God with the Pſaltery and Harp, and *to ſtand every morning and evening to praiſe God, for his mercy endureth for ever*, 1 *Chron.* 23. 30. And as for the coſtly ornaments, the veſſels of Gold and Silver, the Painted and Carved works, there were thoſe that brake them down with Axes and Hammers, and took to themſelves the Houſes of God in poſſeſſion, yea they propagated a more ſimple and purer Worſhip, ſuch as that of *Jeroboam* who brought their houſhold-gods to their doors, and ſet up Calves at *Dan* and *Bethel*, making Prieſts of the meaneſt of the people, who were contented with the free-will Offerings of their Brethren.

1 *Kings* 12.28.

But now though this liberty of Conſcience be denyed us, and King *Solomon* hath eſtabliſhed by a Law all that *David* intended; though he have built and beautified the Temple, and obligeth us to that publick place of Worſhip, and enjoyns us to Worſhip and fall down and kneel as if God were there preſent: Though he requires an Uniformity to all thoſe Forms of Prayer and Thankſgiving which were compoſed by *David* and *Aſaph*, 2 *Chron.* 29. 30. and to joyn with *the Levites which were the Singers, being arayed in white linnen, having Cymbals, Pſalteries and Harps, to make one ſound in Praiſing and Thanking the Lord*, 2 *Chron.* 5. 12. Yea though *Solomon* do ſtint the Spirit of prayer in Gods Miniſters, and forbids them to be *raſh with their mouths*, and *to let their tongues be haſty to utter any thing before the Lord*, as if our extemporary prayers were the Sacrifices of fools: yet may we not complain or ſo much as Petition againſt theſe grievous impoſitions. Nay what is yet worſe, we are required to renounce the Vow at *Hebron*, and the Solemn League which *Jeroboam* and his godly party took with hands lifted up to heaven, and inſtead of the Vow

Pſ. 95.6.

Eccleſ 5.2

to

to God, we are told we muſt keep the Kings command and that *in regard of the oath of God, ch.* 8. 2. And we muſt alſo declare that *againſt the King there is no riſing up*, upon any pretence whatſoever, nor againſt ſuch as are commiſſioned by him; but *if the ſpirit of* ſubordinate *Rulers riſe up againſt us, we may not go out of our places*, nor ſtir beyond our private callings and capacities, but *fear God and the King, and not meddle with them that are given to change*, though it be for a thorow Reformation. And in a word, *Solomon* would put ſuch a gag in our mouths that we may not ſo much as demand, *What is the cauſe that the former days were better than theſe?*

Pro. 30. 3. *Eccl.* 10. 4. *Pro.* 24. 21

But I have ſaved theſe men the labour in ſumming up all the Cauſes of the pretended evils of their times; and how frivolous they are, appears evidently by this, that *David* appointed nothing for the publick Worſhip of God but what he graciouſly accepted. And all that *Solomon* injoyned was immediately directed by the Spirit of God, and ſtands recorded in the Holy Scriptures as general rules to be obſerved in the publick Worſhip of God to all ſucceeding ages.

Solomon well knew that the evils in his days were cauſed by the Complaints of thoſe malicious men who were enemies to his Fathers Government as well as his own, that they intended to bring his Perſon and Government into contempt, and minded not the redreſs of publick grievances as much as of their private fortunes: and if the times were evil, they took a direct courſe to make them worſe, by endeavouring to overthrow all thoſe Conſtitutions which both *Solomon* and his father *David* had well eſtabliſhed. He knew that if theſe Male-contents were permitted to ſow theſe ſeeds of Rebellion, they would like the Dragons teeth ſowed by *Cadmus*

ſpring up into Armed men that would deſtroy their Brethren.

God forbid that we ſhould be inſenſible of our own ſins, or of the tokens of Gods wrath that are upon us. That our Religion ſhould be as *Sion* of old whom no man cared for, or that we ſhould ſuffer our ſelves to be led into Captivity as we were brought out of it, as men in a dream. It is our Intereſt as well as our duty to mourn for other mens ſins as well as our own, but we ſhould do that in ſecret, and take heed that under a pretence of reproving their ſins we do not pour out reproach on their perſons and government, and by ſuch art ſo ſpread abroad their infirmities as to make a cloak for our own iniquities. We may alſo be inſtrumental in a reformation, but we ſhould begin it at the right end, our own wicked hearts and lives, and not at the Heads of our Superiors; to complain that the days are evil, with a deſign by ſuch complaints to make them worſe; to ſearch after remote and ſecret cauſes, and overlook thoſe that are ſo near and obvious in our own boſoms, and with the Harlot in *Solomon* having overlayed her own child to accuſe a tender mother, and ſeek to deprive her of her living child, is a ſubtle deſign, but ſuch as could not ſtand the Teſt of *Solomon*; and a greater than *Solomon* will judge ſuch men.

1 *Kings* 3. 20.

It was obſerved by the Royal Martyr, that whoever intended to bring forth confuſion in a Church or State, have uſed the Midwifry of complaints and tumults. By this Artifice *Abſalom* ſtole the hearts of the people from his Father *David*, *See thy cauſe is right, but there is no man deputed of the King to do thee juſtice,* 2 *Sam.* 15. 3. when the deſign was, *O that I were judge in Iſrael.* And to facilitate his deſign he remembreth his Vow at *Hebron*, that under pretence of Piety to God he might ſtrength-

ſtrengthen his party and the more impunely caſt off his obedience to his Father. By the like art *Jeroboam* had ſtoln the hearts of *Solomon*'s Subjects, and made a great part of *Iſrael* to ſin with him. For though the foundations of *Solomons* Government were ſuch as might have made all *Iſrael* as firm as Mount *Sion* which could not be moved, though in his days there was a confluence of all thoſe bleſſings whereof one or two might have made another Nation happy; yet by their whining murmurings and reſtleſs complaints of heavy yoaks, and approaching Idolatry, of the hainous ſins and imminent dangers of the Nation, they did (*tantum non*) fail but a little of ſubverting the whole frame of the beſt eſtabliſhed Government in the world.

But *Solomon* had a jealous ear which heard all theſe things, and was aſſiſted with more than humane prudence and power to ſuppreſs them. He cruſheth this Cockatrice in the Egg, and diſcovers the folly and impiety of it. *Thou doſt not inquire wiſely, &c.* which brings us to the laſt part of the Text, *non ex ſapientiâ.* Witty men there might be among ſuch (*ingenioſi in malum publicum*) but they were neither wiſe nor good men in the ſence of *Solomon.* For whether by wiſdom we underſtand moral prudence, or (as moſt Expoſitors) true piety and the fear of God, they who thus cauſleſly murmured againſt the King had neither, they acted both againſt Reaſon and Religion.

Firſt againſt *Reaſon.* For what is more irrational than ſolicitouſly to enquire after the cauſes of thoſe things that are not? They might as well ask why the Sun had loſt its light, or the foundations of the earth were removed, which were as true as that the former days were better than thoſe of *Solomon*; which will appear by a ſhort view of the Church and State of *Iſrael* in the days of *Solomon.* For 1. *In riches and wiſdom*

Solo-

Solomon *exceeded all the Kings of the earth that were before him*, 1 *Kings* 10. 27. The Veſſels and Utenſils of Gods Houſe as well as the Kings were of beaten Gold, *for Gold was as common as ſilver, and ſilver as the ſtones in the ſtreets of Jeruſalem*, 1 *Kings* 9. 28. And his Royal Navy commanded the Trade of the world, and kept his Exchequer always full and running over, bringing home 666 Talents of Gold at a time, beſides the rich merchandize from *Tyre* and *Egypt*. There was alſo a general peace to injoy this great plenty, for *Solomon* was in this a Type of Chriſt, there was neither adverſary nor evil occurrence, 1 *Kings* 4. but all *Judah* and *Iſrael* which made a prey of each other in the days of *David*, were united and *dwelt ſafely every man under his own Vine, and under his own fig-tree from* Dan *to* Beerſheba, there was a general and perpetual peace all the dayes of *Solomon*, *ver.* 25. Which peace was the more admirable becauſe that though *Adonijah* had uſurped the Kingdom and ſtrengthned himſelf by the heads of divers factions, *Joab* among the ſouldiers, and *Abiathar* among the Prieſts, and *Shimei* chief of the *Benjamites*; yet was he ſetled on his Fathers Throne without ſhedding of bloud or any oppoſition. His League alſo with *Hiram* deſerves a remark, being a friend to the True Religion, and the moſt potent and skilful in Sea-affairs. But what is eſpecially to be noted is, that all theſe bleſſings were confirmed to him by a promiſe from God for his father *Davids* ſake.

1 *Kings* 11. 12.

2. His clemency did adorn his peace, for he pardoned ſuch offenders as could obtain pardon from themſelves: *Adonijah* that had uſurped the Kingdom, and *Joab* that had barbarouſly ſlain *Abner* and *Amaſa* Captains of his Fathers Hoſt, and *Abiathar* a revolted Prieſt that had ſtrengthned the hands of the Uſurper, and *Shimei* alſo who

who having got the upper ground of *David* ſpit his venome in his Royal face, reviling him (*maledictione forti*) with all the virulence he could, 2 *Sam.* 16. 7.

Yet 3. His clemency was ſeaſoned with juſtice which was inflicted on incorrigible offenders without reſpect of perſons, high and low, natives and ſtrangers, particularly on *Shimei* for that horrid fact on the perſon of his father whom he commanded to be ſlain by the hand of *Benaiah*, and the kingdom was thereby eſtabliſhed in the hand of *Solomon*.

4. His Maximes of Government were of infallible and eternal verity, ſuch as theſe: *Mercy and truth preſerve the King, and by righteouſneſs ſhall his throne be eſtabliſhed.* Pro. 20. 28 *It is the honour of a King to ſearch out a matter.* Pro. 25. 2. *In the multitude of Counſellors there is peace: But where no counſel is, the people fall. Righteouſneſs exalteth a Nation, but ſin is a reproach to any people,* Pro. 14. 34. 11. 14.

And his men were ſuited to his Maxims, men of gravity and experience, of prudence, piety and moderation, ſuch as would have ſecured the Crown to *Rehoboam*, had he not rejected them and inclined to greener heads that were brought up with him. All theſe bleſſings he diſpenſed with great wiſdom, having a heart as capacious as the ſand on the Sea-ſhore. Which wiſdom he acquired partly by giving his heart to it, but it was perfected by the gift of God. This made his face to ſhine ſo as he attracted the admiration of all the Kings of the Earth, and the Queen of the South came from far to be an Ear witneſs of it, and envyed the happineſs of his Subjects. This wiſdom he demonſtrated to be better than ſtrength by ſuppreſſing ſtrife and contention in the firſt riſe of it. He carefully obſerved all the motions of the people, and neglected not in times of peace to make proviſion for war. He had many fortified Cities, and

40000 ſtalls for the horſes of his Chariots, and 40000 horſe, and his people were as the ſand as for number. Notwithſtanding all this preparation of Chariots and horſes *Solomon* knew that Salvation was of the Lord. And that he might obtain the Lord of hoſts to fight for him, he eſtabliſhed the publick Worſhip of God throughout all his Dominions. This made the Crown on *Solomons* head more ſplendid than that wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his Eſpouſals. How could he ſtrengthen himſelf more than by making the building of Gods houſe the foundation of his own? Now whereas the Ark of God in the days of *David* was in a wandring condition, ſometime drawn with Oxen and ſometime with Kine, *Solomon* built it a houſe, and directed the uſe of that houſe to be *a houſe of Prayer*, which God ſo graciouſly accepted that he promiſed, 2 *Chron.* 7. 14, 15. That *his eyes ſhould be open and his ears attent unto the prayers that were made in that place.* How irrational was it then for any to complain that the former days were better than theſe? A King thus ſetled on his Throne might ſcatter away all evil with his eye, and turn their low murmurings into loud Acclamations: but what ſhall we ſay? the warm Sun breeds theſe Vipers and animates them as well as the fire of Contention. Theſe murmurings abounded not only in the wilderneſs, but in *Canaan*, a land that flowed with milk and honey, which they turned to gall and bitterneſs by their diſcontent; *they deſpiſed that holy land.* Yea this ſin prevailed againſt our firſt Parents in Paradiſe, and tempted them by forbidden means to aſpire to greater happineſs and more knowledge than God thought fit for them, and thereby turned Paradiſe it ſelf into a Wilderneſs. Yea this reſtleſs luſt mounted up into heaven, and made ſome of the Angels of God Apoſtates and Devils. And no

wonder

wonder then that it poſſeſſeth thoſe who only by a flaſh of zeal transform themſelves into Angels of light, and makes them act as incarnate Devils. It was a greater wonder how *Solomon* could ſhake off theſe Vipers that ſo faſtned on his hands, and charmed them ſo as they could not hurt him. For no ſooner was *Solomon* removed but they ſpit their venome in the face of *Rehoboam* his Son, though *for three years together he walked in the ways of* David *and* Solomon; but *Jeroboam* in the head of a Covenanted party upbraids the Son with the tyranny of his Father, 1 *Kings* 12. 4. *Thy father made our yoke grievous,* and would impoſe conditions on him, *make thou our yoak lighter and we will ſerve thee,* otherwiſe they were ready to ſerve him as they ſerved his father *David*; for becauſe he did not preſently gratifie them, they ſecond their bold remonſtrance with open defiance, *v.16. What portion have we in David, &c.* And why in *David*? but to ſhew that they hated him the more for his ſake for whom God loved him, even his father *David.*

2. Such complaints are irrational becauſe by them men create troubles to themſelves and others. Their indiſcreet fears and precipitate actions betray them to thoſe dangers they ſeek to avoid, as children in a boat which they fancy ready to ſink, on one ſide, fly all to the other and overturn it on themſelves, Ταράσσει τὺς ἀνθρώπυς ὐ τὰ πράγματα, ἀλλὰ τῶν πραγμάτων δόγματα, it is not ſo much the things we fear or ſuffer as our falſe opinions of them, whereby we torment our ſelves before our time, yea too many vex and diſquiet themſelves for thoſe things for which they ſhould rather rejoyce and be thankful. Thus was *Cain* troubled that his brothers ſacrifice was better accepted. And *Joſephs* brethren repined at his preferment. We call evil good and good evil; and as children cry and grudge, if we be denyed thoſe things which would prove our ruine.

It is our duty therefore to rectifie our opinions concerning the true worth and uſefulneſs of things according to the word of God and right reaſon, and think that beſt which God ſees to be fitteſt for us; and when he gives us bread, not to turn it into gravel and ſtones by our diſcontent.

3. It is irrational, becauſe by a cauſleſs reflection on former, or jealouſie of future times, we deprive our ſelves of preſent bleſſings, and catching at ſhadows loſe the ſubſtance. Therefore *Solomon* often commends a chearful enjoyment of the fruit of our labours, and the portion God hath given us, *Eccleſ.* 9. 7. *Eat thy bread with chearfulneſs, and drink thy wine with a merry heart, for God now accepteth thy works.* And our Saviour forbids us to be ſolicitous for what is to come, as *Solomon* doth for what is paſt, *Matth.*6.34. And the Apoſtle adviſeth us to be *content with ſuch things as we have*, and ſo doth the Philoſopher, ἀσπάσεσθαι τὰ παρόντα to accommode our ſelves to our preſent condition, and if our eſtates will not ſtretch to our minds, to ſtoop our minds to our eſtates. *Dona præſentis cape lætus horæ,*
linque futura.

4. It is irrational, becauſe if our condition be bad, this is a certain mean to make it worſe. It is like the caſting out Devils by *Beelzebub*, a conjuring up ſuch evil ſpirits as we have not power to confine or put down again. When men grow weary of the long continued mercies of God, and loath Manna, it is juſt with God while the meat is yet in our mouths, to pour his wrath upon our heads, and teach us to know the worth of his bleſſings by the want of them. God hath exemplarily puniſhed unthankful murmurers with extraordinary judgements, that all *may hear and fear and do no more ſo wickedly.* The murmuring Iſraelites that *brought up an evil.*

evil report upon the land, dyed by the plague before the Lord, *Numb.* 14. 37. Others of them *periſhed by the deſtroyer,* 1 *Cor.* 10.10. And thoſe in *Numb.* 11. 18. who having Manna enough to eat, *murmured and wept in the ears of the Lord,* ſaying, *Who ſhall give us fleſh to eat? for it was well with us in Egypt. The Lord gave them fleſh to eat till it came forth at their noſtrils, v.* 20. *becauſe they deſpiſed the Lord that was among them, and wept before him ſaying, Why came we out of Egypt?* And for the puniſhment of *Corah,* and ſuch as murmured againſt *Moſes* and *Aaron,* the Lord created a new judgment, for the earth opened her mouth and ſwallowed them up. And that people were not purged from that ſin till they were utterly deſtroyed, as it was threatned, *Deut.* 28. 47,48. *Becauſe thou ſervedſt not the Lord thy God with joyfulneſs and gladneſs of heart for the abundance of all things: therefore thou ſhalt ſerve thy enemies which the Lord ſhall ſend againſt thee, in hunger and in thirſt, and in nakedneſs, and in want of all things, and he ſhall put a yoke of iron on thy neck until he have deſtroyed thee.* *Numb.* 16. 32.

5. It is irrational, becauſe they complain firſt and moſt who have leaſt reaſon. Many a good man who in *Davids* days had ſuffered the loſs of all, and came off only with their lives and ſome marks of their Loyalty in their bodies and eſtates, were abundantly ſatisfied to ſee the King returned in Peace, and the Ark of God ſetled in the beauty of holineſs, could ſay with *Mephiboſheth, Let them take all for as much as my Lord the King is come to his houſe in peace,* and were found faithful and peaceable in the Land. They were the murmurers who as *Ziba, Sauls* ſervant, had made themſelves great with the ſpoils of the Crown and Church lands, but were made to refund a part of it. Though they ſtill enjoyed not only the publick bleſſings of peace and plenty, and a 2 *Sam.* 19. 30.

rich trade, and were received not only to mercy but into favour, and did partake of the Wealthy and Honourable Offices of the Nation, equally, if not beyond thoſe that had better deſerved them, did yet think themſelves not duly rewarded, (as in truth they were not) and on all occaſions reproached the footſteps of Gods anointed, and did not only turn their backs on the Ordinances of the King, but lift up their heels againſt the Ordinances of God alſo.

6. It is unreaſonable to murmur and repine at thoſe things in others which they practiſed and allowed in themſelves. They complained that *Solomon* chaſtiſed them with Rods, when they wounded him with Scorpions. They accuſed him for endeavouring to rule by an Arbitrary power, though he governed himſelf according to the known Laws of God and the Nation, and often relaxed the ſeverity and ſuſpended the execution of them, while they lived in a bold contempt and violation of them all. Great cries were raiſed againſt the Oath of God, and the King, and againſt Uniformity to the Temple Worſhip; when they thought they were all ingaged by *Jeroboams* Covenant, to bring all within the Kings Dominions to an Uniformity according to his Directory for Worſhip. A Toleration was thought intolerable, when *Jeroboam* had ſet up his Calves, and he himſelf burnt Incenſe and made Prieſts of the loweſt of the people, leſt the Kingdom ſhould return to the houſe of *David* (for the true worſhip of God would reduce them to obedience to their lawful King.) But under the Temple ſervice a Toleration is pleaded for as neceſſary for the eaſe and liberty of the people, and if it be denyed, they complain of Tyranny and Perſecution, when by this means *Jeroboam* and a few diſſenters under him deluded the people, and making them believe that he

1 *Kings* 12. 26.

2 *Kings* 12, 28.

and

and his Calves were the Gods that brought them out of *Egypt*, led them directly thither, and betrayed them to that abominable Idolatry. So that in truth the Indulgence which was granted them did produce more miſchief than all the puniſhments inflicted by *Solomon*, which they cauſleſly called perſecution. *Wherefore thou art inexcuſable O man whoever thou art that judgeſt, for wherein thou judgeſt another thou condemneſt thy ſelf, ſeeing thou doſt the ſame* (or worſe) *things: And* (though thou eſcape the judgment of man, yet) *think not that thou ſhalt eſcape the judgment of God, Rom.* 2. 1, & 3. ver. 28.

7. What is more unreaſonable than for men to take occaſion to grow more troubleſome from thoſe things which ſhould quiet them, as diſcontented ſpirits are wont to do? Let favour be ſhewed to the wicked, and he is the more bold and preſumptuous. They turn the grace of God and the King too into wantonneſs. Every indulgence (as to froward children) makes them more pettiſh and inſolent, every conceſſion and yielding is uſed as a ſtep for them to aſcend higher and preſs forward until they get uppermoſt. The craving humor increaſeth by being fed, and with *Solomons* horſe-leech thy cry Give, Give, though they have ſwallowed ſo much that they are ready to burſt. Never was any thing in the world ſo well eſtabliſhed, but there were ſome envious men that found fault with it.

Laſtly, It is irrational, becauſe it is an incurable evil. It is *opprobrium medicorum*, ſuch a plague of the heart as the beſt State Phyſicians have not been able to cure. It will not admit a plaiſter or a medicine to be applied to it. This evil ſpirit though it be not dumb, yet is it ſo deaf, that it will not hear the voice of any Charmer though he charm never ſo wiſely. Neither the mercies nor judgments of God, nor the meekneſs nor miracles of *Moſes* could,

could convince the murmuring *Iſraelites*. And when ſome of them ſaw *Corah* and his company ſwallowed up of the earth, yet as if there had been a tranſmigration of their Souls into their Survivors, the next morning they murmur again, ſaying, Ye have ſlain the people of the Lord. The worſt ſort of Spirits that we read of, might be caſt out by Prayer and Faſting; but this kind can faſt and pray, and ſeemingly reform and ſweep and garniſh the houſe, and then admit ſeven worſe than it ſelf, and at the end is worſe than in the beginning. The Scripture compares this murmuring and rebellious ſpirit to the ſin of Witchcraft which is ſeldom reclaimed to a pious or ſober temper, for like men in a Conſumption they ſeem pleaſed with the diſeaſe, and as *Jonah* they think they do well to be angry with God himſelf, which is the next particular, it is not only irrational but *irreligious*.

Firſt, becauſe theſe men make lyes their refuge, and ſeek to hide their ſin under falſe pretences; for it were eaſie to prove, that no times before *Solomon* were ſo proſperous as his. Though *David* his Father was a man after Gods own heart, yet neither he nor the Ark of God could find a reſting place. It was yet worſe in the days of *Saul*, between whom and the houſe of *David* there was continual war; and before that in the days of *Samuel* when God himſelf was their King, we find that they rejected not *Samuel* only, but God himſelf. And in the times of *Anarchy* when there was no King in *Iſrael*, there was no peace to him that went out, or to him that came in, but every man did what ſeemed good in his own eyes. Before this how long did God bear with the murmuring *Iſraelites*, not in the wilderneſs only under *Moſes* the meekeſt man upon Earth, and *Aaron* the Saint of the Lord, but in *Canaan* againſt God him-

himſelf. And from the beginning *Cain* ſlew *Abel*, and ſo it will be to the end of the world. So that it was a falſe pretence that the former days were better than *Solomons*.

2. It was irreligious, becauſe Religion teacheth us with all thankfulneſs to acknowledge the bleſſings of God and to ſay with *Jacob*, I am leſs than the leaſt of all thy mercies, and not to undervalue them, and expoſtulate with God why am I thus? and what is the cauſe? as if the Almighty had not rewarded us according to our deſerts, or ought to do nothing but what our reaſon approves of. They ought to have conſidered how happy they might have been under ſuch a King, the Son of ſuch a Father, upon whom God had ſet ſuch Signatures of his own wiſdom, Clemency and juſtice, whom God made his *Jedidiah* from his birth, and appeared more than once or twice in many wonderful deliverances of him againſt the Conſpiracies of *Jeroboam*, the diſcontents of *Joab*, *Abiathar* and *Shimei* who went to *Gath* to confer with fugitives and imbroil the kingdom again. If we read of *Solomons* faults we read of his repentance alſo, this Book of *Eccleſ.* being a record of his Penitentials. So that indeed the greateſt cauſe of Evil in his later days was the libertiniſm of ſome who like ſons of *Belial* would indure no yoak nor were ſatisfied till they had got an Indulgence, and were more unſatisfied after they had it. How much better had it been for them while the true Religion and publick peace were in ſafety, to have been humble and thankful to God and the King, to reform their own iniquities and to mourn in ſecret for the Vanities of the Court?

3. If *Solomons* days had been as bad as the ſins of theſe men deſerved, yet were it a point of piety to ſubmit to the mighty hand of God and bear his indignation. This

was

was *Solomons* preſcript approved by God himſelf, 2 *Chron.* 6. 24, *&c. If the people flee before their enemies, if there be famine or peſtilence.* What is to be done? ſurely not as they did in the Prophet, *Jer.* 8. 20. who did fret themſelves and curſe God and the King, and look upward, as if they would be revenged on all that were above them, but every man ſhould *ſearch out the plague of his own heart and repent, and make his ſupplication in Gods houſe ſaying, I have ſinned and done perverſly, and committed iniquity*, and then God promiſed to *hear their prayers, to forgive their ſins and heal their land.* Thus did King *David* in his diſtreſs, he ſaw the hand of God in it, *and opened not his mouth becauſe it was the Lords doing*; and with this God quieted the men of *Judah* and *Benjamin* in the caſe of *Jeroboam*: *This thing is from me.* And though they did not think ſo of King *Solomon*, yet they ought to think that God was wiſe enough to diſpoſe of all things for the good of his Church and people.

Pſ. 9. 39.

1 *Kings* 12. 24.

God and his Vicegerents have their *Arcana imperii* not to be raſhly cenſured or curiouſly inquired into. We ſhould do our duty and leave the conduct of publick affairs to God whoſe Providence over-rules all, and it is much better that things ſhould be as God would have them than as we would, for he acts all towards wiſe and gracious ends, to which though humane actions like the lower Spheres have a contrary tendency of their own, yet the firſt mover makes them all tend to his decrees who brings order out of Confuſion, and all whoſe ways are mercy and truth to them that keep his Covenant. *Non eſt judicandum de operibus Dei ante quintum actum*, we are ſhort-ſighted and cannot ſee to the end of Gods works which are begun in ſecret, & ſometime carried on by contrary means, by weak and divers agents, but he knows how to bring light out of darkneſs and harmony out of diſ-

cord,

cord, and all his providences ſhall end in Holineſs and beauty too. This is that which *Solomon* obſerved, *Eccleſ.* 3. 11. *God hath made every thing beautiful in its ſeaſon*, when it comes to its perfection. Some may think there is no neceſſity of Thunder and Lightning, Storms and Tempeſts, Froſts and Cold, yet theſe contribute to the cleanſing of the Air, the health of our bodies and the fruitfulneſs of the year, as much as calm and Sun-ſhine days. In checker-work the variety of black and white adds to the beauty; and ſome works of Providence like the *China* veſſels, are wrought and perfected in the bowels of the earth and require an age for their Perfection, but then they come forth ſo tranſparent that every one that conſiders them may ſay, *This is the Lords doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.*

4. It is irreligious, as being the ready way to deſtroy Religion, and if that be ruined, we may write *Ichabod* on all things elſe. And this is not more eaſily deſtroyed than by our murmurings and contentions about it; this Dove cannot fall but by a dart feathered from her own wing. The little Foxes within that undermine the Hedge of Diſcipline, make way for the wild Boar to break in and root up our pleaſant Vines. 'Tis our crumbling into little factions under pretence of Religion, that expoſeth us to the enemies of it. If the dangers we fear could but make us unite, our Union would make us ſafe againſt all the attempts of our common adverſaries.

5. It is a tempting and provoking of God in a high degree to complain of thoſe evils, whoſe cauſes and remedies are in our own power. But while we complain of them with our lips, we draw them down with both our hands. This is to do as the *Jews* who cryed out *Venient Romani*, while they were Crucifying the Prince of Peace, and ſo made way for thoſe *Roman* Armies that brought a perpetual deſolation on them. If we only

make an out-cry againſt Popery, and inſtead of making up the breaches ſtill inlarge them by quarrelling with ſuch as are more ready and skilful to do it than our ſelves, that *Roman* Eagle may make a prey of us all. But if, as God hath founded us upon a rock, and compaſſed us about with his Salvation as with Walls and Bulworks, we would be as *Jeruſalem*, a people at unity among our ſelves; if as St. *Paul* adviſeth, we would do our duties to God and the King without murmurings and diſputings, thoſe proud Waves that oppoſe themſelves would be daſht in pieces as hitherto they have been, and neither the gates of *Rome* nor of Hell prevail againſt us.

Laſtly, It is irreligious, becauſe it deſtroys the whole Analogy of Chriſtian Faith, it reflects on Gods Providence, as if he wanted Wiſdom or Goodneſs to Govern the world, and ſets their mouths againſt Heaven, as that proud *Alfonſus* who ſaid of the Creation, that if he had been preſent he could have diſpoſed of things in a better method. It undermines the foundation of all Government in Church and State and Families, if Inferiors ſhould be allowed to queſtion the Commands and Actions of their Superiors; it makes thoſe Chriſtian graces of meekneſs, patience and obedience, which are injoyned towards evil Governours, impoſſible. It robs the Soul of that tranquillity and peace which it might have by reſigning it ſelf to God in well-doing. The ſpirit of grace and peace will not enter into a diſcontented ſpirit. *God was not in the earthquake or the whirlwind, but in the ſtill voice*, in the ſedate and chearful Soul. And therefore *Moſes* calls the murmuring *Iſraelites*, ſinners againſt their own Souls, (*i. e.* againſt their peace and comforts of their life.) The Serpent will devour the Dove, and theſe meager thoughts, like *Pharaohs* lean kine, eat up better thoughts and affections. To a murmuring Soul wiſdom will not enter. And in a word, it would

1 *Kings* 19. 11. *Numb.* 16. 38.

would make the Chriſtian Religion to ſtink among the heathen: and therefore thou doſt not wiſely to inquire after ſuch things.

I have now finiſhed my Diſcourſe on the Text, and if my hearers will but apply the things ſpoken of *Solomons* Kingdom to our own, as every ordinary capacity may do, there needs no other Application. I ſhall end therefore as I begun, *Ne dicas*, Say not thou a confederacy to them that ſay a confederacy to thee, be not allured by their promiſes, nor affrighted by their threats, for their feet are ſwift to ſhed bloud, deſtruction and miſery are in their ways, the way of peace they have not known, and there is no fear of God before their eyes. Learn we of the men of *Iſachar* in *Davids* days, who *had underſtanding of the times, to know what Iſrael ought to do.* Fear God and Honour the King, and meddle not with them that are given to change: but leave the Adminiſtration of publick affairs, and the care of Succeſſion of Crowns and Kingdoms to God and our Superiors, who are more concerned in them and will provide better for them than we can do. Let us ſet bounds to our Paſſions by Reaſon, to our Fears and jealouſies by Religion, to our Errors by Truth, to our Schiſm by Charity and an unanimous conſent in the Worſhip of God, and to our Murmurings by a cheerful improvement of the bleſſings we enjoy: that the voice of the Turtle may be heard in our Land, even Praiſes to our God for the wonderful mercies of This day, and for the continuance of them, Prayers for our King in the words of *Solomons* Subjects, 1 *Kings* 8.66. *The Lord make the name of* Solomon *better than the name of* David, *and his Throne greater than the throne of* David; *and they went to their tents joyful and glad of heart for all the goodneſs that God had done for* Solomon *his ſervant, and for Iſrael his people,* Amen.

1 *Chron.* 12. 32.

Penes vos eſt rerum Arbitrium, nobis relicta eſt obſequii Gloria.

THE END.